Why the Milliner Must Be a Diplomatist.

Troubles Met With in Selling Hats.

"Do I have troubles with women buying hats?" repeated the milliner with a shop near Fifth avenue, where afternoon tea is served between courses—or hats, to be exact—and everything is very Parisian. "I wish I had nothing to do but tell you about them.

"The latest has just happened. This morning one of my best girls came to me with a returned box in her hand.

"My heart sank when she held it out. I knew without the utterance of a single word that it had come from Mrs. Johnson, one of our best and most trying customers. With the hat was a note which read something like this:

"MY DEAR MISS SMITH: I am so sorry to return this hat. It is the prettiest one I have ever had from your place. The word dream poorly expresses it, but I use that term in place of a better. I love it. My sister adores it. All my friends rave over it and hate me for seeing it first. But—Mr. Johnson, my husband, loathes it. So what can I do? I can't have a husband hate me, now, can I? I will drop in within the week and choose one in its place. Yours, ——

"The writer is so pretty that if I took an old pan and tied some strings over it and under her chin tin pans would immediately come in. But she is very hard to please.

"She tries on every hat, finds fault with each and suggests changes. Finally she selects one and says:

"'Do you know, Miss Smith, this isn't so bad. If you will change the shape so that it is a little better suited to my face, put some mauve crushed flowers in place of the rose, and a black plume instead of the white, take off that buckle and use one I will send you of real stones, I think it will do.'

"Then she picks out one or two more and with each she goes through the same performance. Then they are sent to her address. Then I invariably get a note like the above, and it is always that mysterious person, the husband, who objects. Of course, you can't dispute his decision; it's the man who pays for the bonnet and he has a right to sit opposite one he likes.

"Well, I was holding the returned hat and gazing at it with the look that a milliner puts on when she has lost a $20 sale when another woman comes in and I say to her, knowing that she is acquainted with Mrs. Johnson:

"'What kind of a man is Mrs. Johnson's husband? Poor woman, he makes her life miserable so far as her hats are concerned. He must be very fastidious.'

"'Is he?' she replies, coolly. 'I have never met him. Mrs. Johnson and he have been separated for six years.'

"What do you think of that? Of course, I cannot say anything, for I should simply lose custom, but that is one of the troubles we have."

The doors open and a matronly looking person with a soft white pompadour, pink cheeks—very pink, not the ordinary pink of New York—and a very girlish gait in spite of her 60 years, trips in and put out a lavender tinted glove to the milliner.

"Good morning! Isn't it a charming day? Now, dear Miss Smith, don't let that horrid sales girl-woman-lady wait on me this morning. Do you know what she did last time? Actually showed me a hat that was suited for my age! Did you ever hear of such a lack of tact? I want the most foolish hat you've got; now remember, a perfectly silly one, one that looks like me."

In a moment the looker-on has the privilege of seeing the new customer seated before the cheval glass trying on a ridiculous arrangement, consisting of an intoxicated looking rose resting on a small bed of crushed chiffon. The customer smiles at the reflection. The milliner smiles, two of the women smile, the looker-on smiles, in fact the foolish hat has accomplished its mission, for the smiles are not of ridicule, but of subtle feminine understanding. The hat is designed for some man's undoing. All know it and all are glad.

THE HARDEST TO PLEASE.

THE MILLINER'S GIRL.

"What type of woman gives me the most trouble?" The interrogation, put when the elderly customer has departed, causes a long period of reflection to the milliner.

"There are two types that stand out. One of these is the girl of 18 to 20. That is the age when the average feminine person thinks most of what she wears and it is the time when she needs to think least of her clothes. Nearly anything will look well on a girl of that age.

"But she doesn't know it, and she will go on worrying over hats and crying if hers is not as pretty as some one else's, and envying the air that the woman of the world displays, when all the time the woman would give everything she possesses for the eighteen-year-old complexion and eyes and awkard manner of not knowing things.

"The woman who is known among her friends as being well dressed is, as a general thing, our best customer. She has made a complete study of herself; she knows every line in her face and head, every curve in her form, every shade that she can wear and every color that she cannot.

"You can't delude her at all; you can't make her buy a hat or even suggest. She orders and we obey, and it is a delight to obey, for we recognize that in comparison with her knowledge ours is crude, indeed.

"I will give you an example. Yesterday a woman of the class I describe came in. She was perfectly gowned in a plain tailor made walking suit of black broadcloth. Her hair was coiffured carefully in the way she prefers. Everything about her was perfectly plain, perfectly severe and perfectly studied.

"She had come for her winter's hats and she had prepared herself just as every other woman should do, but rarely does. She had no frills, because she knew that a hat that would be fairly becoming with that plain gown would be extremely becoming with more elaborate productions.

"The black was a part of the scheme. You cannot always tell about other colors; they give the complexion a different tint; they do all sorts of things with you, and nine women out of ten don't stop to think of this; but this woman knew and wore black on that account.

"She knew just the light she wanted to sit in; she had the chair and glass arranged properly, and then she told exactly the shape, color and general effect of the hat she wanted. It took her just one half hour, and when she had finished she had two of the most stunning hats in the shop, had saved her time and ours and gained the admiration of everybody in the place.

"Speaking about arranging her own chair and mirror," the milliner went on, "there are tricks in every trade. It is natural for us to put a customer in the most favorable light, and if it happens to be a rose shaded light and she doesn't notice it so much the better.

"Electric light is the hardest thing in the world on a woman's complexion. It is, therefore, desirable to soften the glare with some tinted silk. The average woman recognizes this in her house, but often when she comes to try on a bonnet she wants a glaring electric light, because she imagines that she is being cheated if we shade the bulbs."

While the explanation is being made the looker-on notices that a very stunning young woman, trying on a bewildering combination of champagne colored fur felt with pink roses and blonde net before the mirror lighted as described, is on the fine edge of indecision. A signal passes between the manager and the salesgirl, and the latter, with a pretense of careless impulse, seizes a long feather boa conveniently near, throws it about the neck of the woman at the mirror, and in a moment indecision vanishes.

The soft fluff about the customer's throat has completely altered the picture, and the customer does not know the reason for it. The manager admits her art.

"There is something about the feather boa that softens the most trying face," she says, "and we keep one near at hand so that whenever it is needed all the girl has to do is to catch it up and act as if it was an impulsive idea, as if the woman's beauty was so striking it must be emphasized. You get the idea?

"The second type of woman who gives us trouble is naturally the widow. There is no one more difficult to please, and the more grief stricken she is, the more one needs to be ready with patience illimitable, for she expects you to be sympathetic. Mourning is hard on the face anyway.

"There was one woman in last week who hesitated a long time between a bonnet of crape with a heavy veil and a stunning little heliotrope toque. She looked like a fright in the black and ten years younger in the heliotrope.

"Finally, she drew out her handkerchief and dabbed her eyes.

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT.

"'I want the black,' she wailed. 'It harmonizes perfectly with my feelings, but dear John did hate to see me in black. Even the slightest suspicion of it seemed to hurt him like a blow.'

"She turned to her companion, a woman of her own age.

"'What do you think, dear?'

"The friend did not respond to her cue. She was rather hard featured, and if I had to guess locality I should say she came from near the Maine woods. She spoke right up:

"'Take the black one, of course; it's the only decent thing you can do.'

"It's lucky she did not see the look that woman cast on her!

"I suppose," rambled on the milliner, "that the hat has stood in the way of more matrimonial proposals than any other article of furniture or personal apparel. One of my customers told a story illustrating this recently.

"She was a very stylish girl and had been married only a little while, not long enough to wear out her trousseau. One evening she was at a theatre party and a young man who had been paying a good deal of attention to one of her friends came and sat by her at the restaurant supper which followed.

"'I've been admiring your stunning hat all evening,' he began.

"She thought this was rather odd, as he had never complimented her before in any way, and the hat was rather an inconspicuous one, just a bit of lace and flower, but with the true French touch. His next remark was made in a very insinuating tone.

"'Would you mind,' he ventured, 'telling me how much a woman pays for a hat like that?'

SOME OF THE FOOLISH HATS.

"'I paid twenty-five for this,' she answered.

"For a moment she thought he was going to ask if she meant cents, then, after another careful appraising glance, he said, in a horror struck tone:

"'Does a woman pay $25 for a little thing like that?' and in the tone she could see that the marriage altar was slipping away into a nebulous dream.

"However, he was very much in love and was determined that he would not give up without a struggle. Apparently, judging from his next remark, matrimony and hats had been connected in his mind for a long period.

"He referred to a function they had both attended a month before. She had on a very pretty hat then, and, with an attention to detail which would have done justice to a man milliner, he described color, shape and trimming.

"'Was'—he stammered a little—'that hat as expensive as this?'

"The hat in question she had made herself from odds and ends and the total cost had been 44 cents. She told him after a rapid arithmetical sum. His face flushed and his eyes sparkled.

"'Forty-four cents,' he repeated, and the glance of admiration he cast upon her more than repaid the economy she had practised in making the halo. 'Do you know, I have never seen you look better than you did that evening. Lots of people were talking about it. Only forty-four cents? You don't say! Women are wonderful creatures, aren't they?'

A STORY IN A FEATHER.

"It wasn't fifteen minutes after that the two heads, his and hers, were close together—probably talking over how beautiful the woman who told the story was—or something else.

"It isn't very much trouble," continued the milliner, "to sell to the feminine commuter. Usually she comes in with the whole family, and the funny thing about them is that they all want hats of the same kind.

"You'll see sometimes a mother and four daughters all hatted alike, just because there is always one in a family who has the lead, and even in matters of dress the others follow like sheep.

"A thing a woman should never do is to trust the cheap milliner of a friend. One of my customers was telling me her experience.

"Every once in a while the friend will display a natty looking little hat and announce that she has found the cleverest milliner, who works for almost nothing, will use your old material and take no end of trouble.

"The second woman goes there and the hat that she gets would scare a scarecrow. The truth is that the first woman as a general thing insinuatingly remarks to the novice in the trade that if her trial hat is satisfactory she can bring the whole West Side there, with occasional personally conducted parties from Bronxville and Lawrence Park.

"Of course she gets a hat that the milliner really loses on—it is a sprat to catch a whale—and when the woman's friends come in and get the ordinary trade article they throw the hats back at the milliner's head and look up the friend to remonstrate with her."

OLD FOLKS IN SINGING SCHOOL.

THE YOUNGEST PUPIL PAST 65, THE OLDEST MORE THAN 90.

An Aged Class at the Old People's Home Still Stirred by Love Songs—Cantankerousness Incidentally Driven Out of the Institution by the Power of Music.

In the singing class at the Old People's Home, in Sixty-eighth street near Lexington avenue, the youngest pupil is past 65 and the oldest something more than 90. If their ages were a fourth of what they are the enjoyment of these singers in their lesson could not be greater nor their enthusiasm more.

Looking along the lines of snowy polls and withered faces, as these old people sit singing in the chapel of the home each Monday afternoon, one would expect thin tones and voices cracked and quavering to prevail, but, singularly enough, this is not the case.

When the writer passed the gray haired sentinel at the entrance door the lesson was in progress. Hearing the first lines of the love song "Drink to me only with thine eyes," as the voices did not seem those of either men or women, the first impression of the visitor was that a boy choir was practising, though attentive listening revealed the absence of the fresh flexibility which characterizes the voices of boys.

But young men and women in the first flush of youthful ardor would scarcely have sung this song of sentiment with more feeling than did these ancient singers, who were so absorbed that they scarcely noted the entrance of a stranger. It was easy to believe that they were carried back of the years to the time in their lives when "life was young and love was king," on the tide of this heart moving song.

Was it the stir of the love sentiment which never grows cold that rounded and made even and strong the tones from those shrivelled throats? If in the hymns that followed their voices had become shrunken and sharp, it might have seemed so, but they did not. With no accompaniment, they sang songs and hymns, with little halts for tone practice, without a break in a single voice, and with such evident enjoyment as was good to see.

When D. A. Blackman, who in the early spring organized and from that time until the present has been conducting this singing class, was asked if his object in teaching these elderly people singing was to fit them for the choir invisible, he answered, smiling:

"I believe what they are doing will both directly and indirectly tend to fit them for that choir, but I have reasons that include results more immediate and tangible for giving them this instruction.

"Did you ever think what it must be for men and women, many of them of more than average intelligence, to be shut away from the great pulse of the world's activity and have absolutely nothing to do but look backward and contrast a trying inactive present with a past bright with the glamour of hope and achieving? To give such something they can do which tends to make their lives brighter and easier to live is manifestly humane; but even this is not my chief reason.

"There are so few things that elderly people can do that there is not a wide choice in attempting to do even this. Singing is not supposed to be one of them, but having found that the forming of a tone depends on a mental attitude I was convinced that it could be accomplished at any time in life; that there is no age limit.

"It is usually conceded that nothing can be done with the voice after one has reached his forty-fifth year."

At this point a woman, wrinkled and bent, but bright of eye, who had been singing with great vigor and volume, interrupted by remarking with vehemence:

"Just let any one who thinks that come and hear us sing and he'll know he's mistaken. Six months ago I didn't think I should ever sing this side of heaven, but I've found I don't have to wait to get there."

"That's correct," said Mr. Blackman. "There is no need, it matters not how old one is, to wait to get to heaven to be able to sing, for the secret of tone production is a knowledge of what and how and not a condition of the organs.

"The voice is composed of five qualities. These are: Form, which distinguishes one vowel from another; intensity, which gives the voice its carrying power; resonance, that is ring and brilliancy; purity, complete freedom from the aspirates and all other objectionable qualities; flexibility, which is simply the opposite of rigidity, although it is often confused with agility.

"These qualities are controlled by three laws: Shaping the mouth to form the voice, focus of the breath at a given point, quantity of breath to insure purity and flexibility.

"I have found that development of the muscles of the throat is non-essential, while the understanding of these qualities and the laws which direct them enables a person easily, whatever his age, to use his voice to interpret the emotions of his mind and soul.

"When these pupils, who have each of them a good many years to his or her account, had mastered the principle of these qualities and laws, had them clearly defined in their minds, they were able to sing as you have heard them, without the breaks, twangs and unmusical thinness of tone which we are accustomed to associate with the voices of those past middle life."

Holding that the voice does not depend on muscles, Mr. Blackman maintains that long hours of practice are wholly unnecessary. The only value of practice is in making the pupil think correctly, he says, and, after experimenting with many voices, he finds that pupils can be trained much more successfully and in one third of the time by his "non-practice" method.

To prove the correctness of this conclusion he calls attention to the achievements of his elderly pupils. The way in which these old people sing is calculated to confirm confidence in the method.

Whatever the conclusion as to the vocal achievements of these old men and women, criticism is disarmed when it is taken into account that the main object in teaching to sing is not vocalization, but "to master the great secret of life," as their teacher puts it. This great secret, Mr. Blackman says, enables its possessor instantly to assume under all circumstances and without effort the right mental attitude.

To show that this musical instruction has a decided and clearly defined effect on character the matron of the home was called and asked to state the change she had noted among those in her charge since they have been taking singing lessons. As a witness she called a plethoric old lady with a certain strike out from the shoulder vigor and asked her if she was willing to tell how the singing lessons had helped her to control her temper.

The old lady seemed quite proud to relate her experience and began by confessing that she was very short of temper and that when she was put out she did not care who knew it. She was most likely to get angry when she was not served promptly at table or did not get a desirable helping.

Before she took the singing lessons, however firmly she resolved not to give way to her temper, when things did not go to her mind she was certain to get into a fury. Now when she felt her gorge rising she sang in her mind, if she could not well do so audibly, and her anger disappeared.

Miss Daton, the matron, says that the cantankerousness that had been the rule with quite a number of those in her charge has since they have learned to sing been the exception and that the health as well as the manners of the inmates is much improved.

One experience related by Miss Daton was as follows: One of the elderly women in the home was subject to fits of insanity. At such times she was violent and hurled about and broke anything she could lay her hands on.

No potion was of any avail in calming her, and when these seizures were upon her she was the terror of the institution, until it occurred to Miss Daton that, as the singing lessons had so altered others for the better, they might have a beneficent effect on her.

Once when the woman was suffering from a severe paroxysm Miss Daton began singing in a low voice "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." With her hand upraised to fling what she had in it the old lady halted and listened, became quiet and sank down on her bed.

Before the second singing of the familiar hymn was finished she was sleeping peacefully. Afterward, each time she became violent she was quieted in this way.

The last number that the aged choir sang confirmed Mr. Blackman's assertion that when the right mental attitude and control were gained, however long one may talk or sing he will not experience hoarseness or throat weariness. The closing number was "I dwell in the midst of God's love, his wisdom and power; forever my shield these will be, contentment I'll have every hour," which was composed for these old people by Mr. Blackman. After more than an hour's constant singing their voices were full, strong and even, and they sang these lines with the vigor and enthusiasm of a fresh attack.

Cocktail at Three Forks.

From the Anaconda Standard.

"I was standing in the barroom in a resort at Three Forks," said a travelling man, "waiting for the proprietor to arrive, in the hope of placing a small order. While I was waiting, two cowboys, wrapped in fur coats, their own dignity and a reputation as the top riders of the country which stretches away toward the head of Willow Creek, came into the saloon and, marching up to the bar, demanded a cocktail.

"The bartender looked nonplussed for a moment, but he was not to be shut out, so he grabbed the biggest glass he could find behind the bar and immediately got busy. If there was anything there he missed putting into that glass, from the salt and pepper sauce used to flavor the beer, to the snippings from the ends of the cigars which he found in the cigar cutter, I could not see it, and when he had finally finished he had two big beer glasses full of the mixture.

"The boys both tasted the beverage, and it did not taste good. Each had unlimbered a big gun and, playfully toying with the weapons, they suggested that the bartender drink his own mixture. It required some persuasion, but finally, to avoid trouble, he swallowed the contents of both glasses. 'Now, make your will, you would be poisoner,' shouted the punchers and solemnly they put their guns back where they belonged, treated the house to the cigars and faded away into the distance, their horses hitting only the high spots as they disappeared up the valley.

"And I tell you, the impromptu bartender had good occasion to make his will. For three or four hours he was the sickest man I ever saw, and it took the services of a doctor, who worked over him for an hour or two, to bring him back to life again."

THE NEW WALK IS A PRANCE.

ONE MUST LEARN IT TO WEAR THE NEW SKIRT WITH GRACE.

The Two Fashions Go Together—It Is a High Stepping Walk and Has an Excellent Effect on the Body—Deep Breathing—The Arms and Hands.

"I have just got one of the new skirts, and to wear it properly I am learning to walk again," explained a woman whom a friend found prancing up and down in front of the pier glass.

"The new walk is entirely different from anything you ever attempted, but you must acquire it if you wear the new skirt.

"The new skirt is the Dolly Varden. It is the same length all the way around, and it is very full. Of course it is tight on the hips and wide around the foot, and when you walk there is a certain swing to it.

"It is the skirt to which you have been accustomed all the fall, but now that winter is coming on it seems as though it were longer and fuller and wider and more Dolly Vardeny than ever. And harder to walk in.

"It is easy enough to walk with a long skirt, for then you simply grab it in your hand and trudge along, but to walk correctly and gracefully, easily and comfortably, is quite a different matter if you are wearing a short skirt.

"The trouble with the short skirt is that you walk up the front of it. Theoretically, it is so short that you don't step upon it, but actually you walk up the middle breadth of it with alarming frequency. It swings only two inches from the ground, and to save your life you can't help stepping on it unless you have acquired the new walk.

"The girl who walks in the new fashion is a high stepper. She must learn to lift her feet off the ground and to plant them firmly as she moves along.

"It is not a tread, and it is not a gallop, nor is it a crawl. It is more like a prance. The walk is very far from being a glide, and it isn't the golf stride.

"To learn to prance correctly, stand erect in front of the glass and turn so that you can see your profile. Now lift your chin, throw out your chest, pull your shoulders down, draw in your abdomen, place both hands upon your hips and take a step.

"Follow this first step with a second and a third. Walk until you are out of sight in the glass, then go back and begin over again. This is the only way you will learn the new walk.

"There is this to be said about the new walk, that it is youthful. It makes you look a great deal younger.

"The new walk has an excellent effect upon the body. It is better than bicycling, for it brings each muscle into play every minute.

"To practise the new walk you should put on a short skirt, preferably one which comes only to the knees. This gives freedom of action.

"Put your hands on your hips, throw your head back, broaden your shoulders and walk, throwing the knees well up into the air at each step. Don't lift the foot high, but draw the knees well up. This will give you the graceful prance of the season.

"Now, maybe you think that walking in this way is not graceful, but put your Dolly Varden skirt on, your round, full skirt, and try it. It lifts the skirt so that you do not step on it and it carries you along gracefully.

"Of course a fat woman cannot hope to walk in this manner, and no woman who tips the scales over 170 should attempt it. It is for the tall, slight woman, for the one who is a little under the average weight rather than over.

"If you are learning the new walk you must try the exercises for deep breathing, for the two go together. One of these is called shoulder lifting. This is practised by the Hindu Brahmins.

"Throw back your shoulders, lift them as high as you can just as though you were shrugging them; lower them, pull them forward until your chest is hollow, throw them back, lift them again, and go on in this way until you have described a circle with the shoulders.

"This will take the fat off the shoulder-blades and give you grace and facility in walking. Go through with this half a dozen times a day, pulling in long, deep breaths all the time.

"The woman who is going to walk well must learn how to use her hands. There are some don'ts to those who are learning how to walk. Don't fling your arms around, don't throw your hands here and there, don't carry them stiffly, don't walk with your hands behind you.

"Be careful how you stand. The woman who stands with her hands upon her hips is impossible.

"The woman who stands with her hands clasped behind her aims to be graceful, no doubt, but she is usually ludicrous, for she makes her shoulders narrow and her back humpy. It is only a slender slip of a girl who can stand with her hands behind her and do it prettily.

"Don't rest your hands on top of your head. This always rests the hands, but it is not beautiful, and if you get in the habit of doing it when you are alone, you will certainly do it when you have company.

"Don't put your hands back of your neck. There is always a temptation to do this, because every woman gets tired right at the base of the brain.

"Don't fold your arms. It gives one a certain judicial look, a look as though one were coming to judgment, and a severe, hard expression, which is far from beautiful.

"If you have pretty hands and nice arms you can clasp your hands in front of you, but be careful how you do it. Don't stretch your arms out in a deadly grip, and don't turn your arms inside out, as though you were stretching. Let the tips of the fingers rest prettily together, if you please, and then look in the glass to see if the motion is becoming to you.

"When you walk try to see how your hands look best. There are those who can let arms hang at the sides without the temptation to swing them, and other arms swing as though they were pendulums.

"There are people who can lift one arm as they walk, and can allow the hand to lightly rest upon the breast. Again there are people who can walk with arms slightly curved, and can do this with nice effect. It is well to experiment a little with your arms when you are walking, for you can spoil your whole appearance by carrying them wrong.

"Always throw your shoulders back when you are practising the new walk and breathe deeply."

PECAN SHELLING.

Many Hundreds of People Occupied in Extracting the Kernels of Nuts.

AUSTIN, Tex., Nov. 4.—Some idea of the magnitude of the pecan nut meat industry may be had when it is stated that in San Antonio alone there are 1,700 members of the Pecan Shellers' Union, a labor organization composed of men engaged as a regular business in the shelling of pecan nuts and extracting the delicious kernels.

Not all of the pecan shellers in San Antonio belong to the union. There are several hundred other men, women and children in that city who gain a livelihood from the work. There are branches of the Pecan Shellers' Union in Austin and several other towns of the State.

The pecan nut shelling season lasts from October 1 to July 1. The new crop of nuts begin to come into market about October 1, and from then until January 1 the business of extracting the kernels is very active. The kernels are shipped in large bulk to New York, St. Louis and other cities, where they are used by confectioners in the manufacture of candies.

Pecan shelling is a comparatively new industry. It had its origin, so far as its becoming a recognized business is concerned, a few years ago when a candy manufacturer of New York visited Texas.

He ate some of the candy made and sold by Mexican street venders in San Antonio. Pecan kernels form an important ingredient of this candy. As an experiment he arranged for a small shipment of the pecan meats to be made to him.

The kernels were received in due time and the highest art of the candymaker was employed in their use. The pecan candy became popular almost instantly and other orders for the pecan kernels were placed.

That was the beginning of an industry which now gives employment to several thousand people. There is a big demand for the pecan kernels in every large city in the country.